



NEWS RELEASE

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NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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USDA Releases the 2018 Census of Aquaculture Results

Total sales of aquaculture products in 2018 was \$1.5 billion, an increase of 10.5% from 2013, according to the 2018 Census of Aquaculture released today by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. In 2018, there were 2,932 aquaculture farms with sales in the United States, down 5% from 2013. Five states – Mississippi, Washington, Louisiana, **Virginia**, and California – accounted for 51% of aquaculture sales and 37% of aquaculture farms in 2018.

"The 2018 Census of Aquaculture updates important information about the industry that we last produced in 2013," said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. "These valuable data tell the story of U.S. aquaculture, following and expanding on the Census of Agriculture. The information in the report helps trade associations, governments, agribusinesses, and others learn about aquaculture and make informed decisions that have a direct impact on the future of the industry."

The 2018 Census of Aquaculture provides detailed information about production and methods, surface water acres and sources, sales, point of first sale outlets, and aquaculture distributed for restoration, conservation, enhancement, or recreational purposes.

Data highlights for **Virginia** include:

- Total aquaculture sales in 2018 was \$112.6 million and ranked 4th in the U.S.
- Total number of aquaculture operations with sales were 191 farms.
- Sales of food fish was \$15.4 million, an increase of 35% from 2013.
- The sales of mollusks was \$94.3 million, compared to \$41.5 million from 2013.
- Oysters are the top species in both sales and number of farms.
- Oyster sales, valued at \$62.4 million, accounted for 55% of all sales in 2018.
- Oyster farms, numbering 134 operations, made up 70% of all aquaculture operations.

An aquaculture farm is defined as any place from which \$1,000 or more of aquaculture products were produced and sold or distributed for restoration, conservation, enhancement, or recreation during the census year. Aquaculture is defined as the farming of aquatic organisms, including baitfish, crustaceans, food fish, mollusks, ornamental fish, sport or game fish, and other aquaculture products. Farming involves some form of intervention in the rearing process, such as seeding, stocking, feeding, protection from predators, etc. Fish, crustaceans, mollusks, and other aquatic products caught or harvested by the public from non-controlled waters or beds are considered wild caught and are not included as aquaculture.

The Census of Aquaculture is a Census of Agriculture Special Study, or follow-on, that expands on the data collected for 2017. The last Census of Aquaculture was conducted in 2013. To access the 2018 Census of Aquaculture results and other agriculture census data, visit www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus.

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